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THESIS

**THE CONTINUED TRANSITION OF THE SOUTH
AFRICAN NATIONAL DEFENSE FORCE: RESERVE
FORCE INTEGRATION AND UTILIZATION**

by

Lance Eric Englet

December 2000

Thesis Advisor:
Second Reader:

Harold Trinkunas
Paul Stockton

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instruction, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188) Washington DC 20503.				
1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)		2. REPORT DATE December 2000		3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED Master's Thesis
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE: THE CONTINUED TRANSITION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL DEFENSE FORCE: RESERVE FORCE INTEGRATION AND UTILIZATION			5. FUNDING NUMBERS	
6. AUTHOR Lance E. Englet				
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME (S) AND ADDRESS (ES) Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, CA 93943-5000			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME (S) AND ADDRESS (ES) N/A			10. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER	
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government.				
12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.			12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE	
13. ABSTRACT (maximum 200 words) <p>In the past decade, South Africa has undergone radical transitions in government, social integration, and direction. The most remarkable is the restructuring of the military, which included integration of former homeland defense units, the South African Defense Force (SADF), Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA – a military arm of the PAC), and the incorporation of Um Khonto we Sizwe (MK – militant wing of the ANC) members into the new South African National Defense Force (SANDF). The new democratic government implemented civilian control measures and added transparency to all military operations. The integration and transition led to drastic downsizing of the active component, new involvement of the reserves, drastic cuts in military spending and complete reorganization of the Ministry of Defense. Today, success of the young democracy depends on the state's ability to address plaguing social crisis of education, housing, unemployment, and AIDS. Simply put, South Africans face limitless challenges with severe economic and financial constraints. Already the benchmarks highlighted in the 1998 <i>Defence and Review</i> and 1996 <i>White Paper on Defence</i> are no longer viable due to budget constraints.</p> <p>This thesis argues that given the prominence of severe budget limitations, significant social issues, and increasing economic concerns, the Reserve Force can play a crucial role in South Africa's future in terms of regional stability and democratic stability within its borders. The thesis also asserts that a well-structured reserve facilitates a smaller active force while improving countrywide social conditions and minimizing Ministry of Defense budgetary requirements.</p>				
14. SUBJECT TERMS: African National Congress, Reserve Force, Civilian Control, Civil-Military Relations, Ministry of Defense, Military Support to Civilian Authorities, Negotiations, Southern Africa, South Africa, South African National Defense Force, South African Defense Force, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK).			15. NUMBER OF PAGES 78	
			16. PRICE CODE	
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT Unclassified	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE Unclassified	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT Unclassified	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT UL	

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**THE CONTINUED TRANSITION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL
DEFENSE FORCE: RESERVE FORCE INTEGRATION AND UTILITZATION**

Lance E. Englet
Captain, Oregon Army National Guard
B.A, University of Oregon, 1994

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND CIVIL-MILITARY
RELATIONS**

from the

NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
December 2000

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ABSTRACT

In the past decade, South Africa has undergone radical transitions in government, social integration, and direction. The most remarkable is the restructuring of the military, which included integration of former homeland defense units, the South African Defense Force (SADF), Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA – a military arm of the PAC), and the incorporation of Um Khonto we Sizwe (MK – militant wing of the ANC) members into the new South African National Defense Force (SANDF). The new democratic government implemented civilian control measures and added transparency to all military operations. The integration and transition led to drastic downsizing of the active component, new involvement of the reserves, drastic cuts in military spending and complete reorganization of the Ministry of Defense. Today, success of the young democracy depends on the state's ability to address plaguing social crisis of education, housing, unemployment, and AIDS. Simply put, South Africans face limitless challenges with severe economic and financial constraints. Already the benchmarks highlighted in the *1998 Defence and Review* and *1996 White Paper on Defence* are no longer viable due to budget constraints.

This thesis argues that given severe budget limitations, significant social issues, and increasing economic concerns, the Reserve Force can play a crucial role in South Africa's future in terms of regional stability and democratic stability within its borders. The thesis also asserts that a well-structured reserve facilitates a smaller active force while improving countrywide social conditions and minimizing Ministry of Defense budgetary requirements.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Given the prominence of severe budget limitations, significant social issues, and increasing economic concerns, the Reserve Force (RF) can play a crucial role in South Africa's future in terms of regional stability and democratic stability within its borders, because a well-structured reserve facilitates a smaller active force while improving countrywide social conditions and minimizing Ministry of Defense budgetary requirements. However, budget requirements are not the only consideration.

The primary obstacles regarding RF integration into the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) are the support and acceptance by the citizens and a need for clear state strategy regarding roles and missions. The RF in itself does not solve the internal issues of South Africa. However, with continued transformation and inclusion in the state security planning process, the RF can

- Reduce defense budget requirements while enhancing the overall combat capabilities of the SANDF through task force assistance;
- Create a larger more representative civilian participation in defense matters through local RF units and improve apartheid perceptions of Commandos and military personnel;
- Provide an opportunity for labor skill education to unskilled citizens, which enhances the economic capabilities of South African citizens;
- Provide assistance to local SAPS; and
- Allow for international peacekeeping exchanges between South Africa and other nations.

It is the state's responsibility to ensure the RF receives the necessary resources and guidance to achieve the desired end state. These responsibilities are as follows:

- Allocate state funds specifically for the RF;
- Ensure soldiers receive pay and benefits equal to the active component;
- Pass legislation protecting citizen-soldier employer rights; and
- Establish and ensure uniform standards for all military personnel.

In sum, memories of apartheid, race relations, inequality of wealth and resources, and pressures from various stakeholders and economic factions amplify social and force-planning complexities. Inclusion and utilization into the civilian controlled military of a Reserve Force requires cooperation on all levels from citizens, government, and military personnel.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to recognize the cooperation of the individuals who kindly consented to interviews for this thesis. I owe special thanks to Professor Dana Eyre, who guided me through the thesis process. To Professor Paul Stockton, who inspired me to pursue the subject and the faculty at the Naval Postgraduate School, Professor Rodney Minott, Professor Harold Trinkunas, Professor Tom Bruneau, and Professor Letitia Lawson, all of whom listened and provided answers. Their patience made this thesis a reality.

Special thanks to Major General Alexander Burgin, Adjutant General State of Oregon, who allowed me to attend the NSA program, and Brigadier General Dennis Merrill, Major John Butler, and those in the chain-of-command who supported my assignment to the Naval Postgraduate School and Major General Raymond F. Rees, Deputy Director National Guard Bureau, for having the vision in providing this opportunity to National Guardsmen.

Finally, and most important, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to my wife who agreed to place her life on hold, pack up the house, and move while I went to school and for listening to each written section again and again as I completed the project. Thank you.

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I. INTRODUCTION

"It is universally acknowledged that in a democracy the Citizen in Uniform, the part-time soldier, is an indispensable element of a country's defense."

- Joe MoDise, Minister of Defense, 5 June 1996

A. Background and Summary of the Argument

Among the most transparent and open debates in South Africa today is redefining South African National Defense Force (SANDF), in mission and force structure. There are four major positions in the debates concerning the future of the SANDF. They are:

- The defense force is unneeded;
- The defense force should be designed primarily to execute internal security; tasks in support of the South African Police Service (SAPS);
- The defense force should be focused primarily on peace missions; and
- The defense force should have a conventional defense role.

Earlier recommendations on restructuring the SANDF within the 1996 *White Paper on Defense* and the 1998 *Defense Review* have already been scrapped, because, simply stated, South Africa cannot afford the costs of a large standing army. This thesis argues that given the prominence of severe budget limitations, significant social issues, and increasing economic concerns, the Reserve Force can play a crucial role in South Africa's future in terms of regional stability and democratic stability within its borders. The thesis also asserts that a well-structured reserve facilitates a smaller active force

while improving countrywide social conditions and minimizing Ministry of Defense budgetary requirements.

In South Africa, memories of apartheid, race relations, inequality of wealth and resources, and pressures from various stakeholders and economic factions amplify force-planning complexities.

Three things appear certain in South Africa today.

- The Reserve Force is a part of an overall solution, not a fully comprehensive response to social, political, and racial issues.
- South Africa is a regional leader that must have a strong military to legitimize its future political dealings.
- South Africa's current Reserve Force requires management focus on all levels if it is to reduce its perceived threat to its neighbors.

A reorganized military with emphasis on the reserves, can meet South Africa's defense requirements in the 21st century. The success of solution, which incorporates a reserve component, depends on civilians overcoming apartheid perceptions of the reserves, streamlining and integrating active and reserve roles and missions, and ensuring that the government bridge employer reservist gaps.

An improved Reserve Force loosely based on the roles of the American National Guard as part of a total state program provides a tested base to assist with internal domestic issues, but it is not a solution in itself. The existing institutions in South Africa can support a redesigned Reserve Force. Nevertheless, equally important, is that society accept and support the Reserve Force. Changes within the Reserve Force will impact the designs of the Active Component leading to the question of will the military accept

increased involvement of the Reserve Force into its existing structure? Second, who will be responsible for training and evaluation of the Reserve Force? Third, will the already limited military defense budget have the ability to support the organization? Finally, how will the state utilize the Modified Reserve Force and will society and military view it as legitimate? Induction of an increased Reserve Force role creates additional structural and economic reform challenges.

B. Importance of the Topic

As the world moves towards democracy, a government's ability to balance and manage security and military needs with other social requirements becomes its primary role. In this sense, South Africa is not an anomaly; rather it reflects a global trend towards democratic consolidation. Other countries, specifically those divided racially and culturally, can apply the lessons learned from the peaceful transition in South Africa.

The South African National Defense Forces continued transition is critical to the success of South Africa's democracy. It plays an important role in regional security in Southern Africa and future African development south of the Sahara. A summary of the present situation follows:

- South Africa has the largest and most advanced military in southern Africa.
- The challenges facing South Africa require a combined military and government cooperative effort.
- South Africa's GDP is approximately four times larger than the other eleven southern African states combined.

- Political success in South Africa will likely influence the future of much of Africa.
- South Africa's neighboring states do not present an external threat. Thus, the state can use the SANDF and Reserve Force as auxiliary law enforcement with the South African Police Service (SAPS).
- South Africa could become embroiled in their resolution at the behest, for example, of the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) or the Southern African Development Community (SADC).
- Reorganization and utilization of the Reserve Force will provide opportunity for desperately needed labor skills within the country, while employing many of the nation's unemployed and is less threatening to its neighbors.
- South Africa is the only nuclear capable state to surrender its nuclear arsenal.

From an American strategic and peacekeeping standpoint, success in South Africa provides relief from potential future United States deployments and an opportunity for military exchange on a state-to-state basis. Transition in South Africa has led to difficult and abrupt systemic changes, but the government must accomplish more if it is to serve its people and assume the pivotal role in southern African affairs.

C. Methodology

The basis of this thesis is a case study designed to test the plausibility of the adoption of a reserve force in South Africa according to military, civilian, and government documents addressing the transition process in South Africa. These documents include:

- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa
- The White Paper on Defence, "Defence in Democracy," 1996
- The Defence Review, 1998

I have conducted interviews with members of the South African Ministry of Defense, Consulate, and military, and have related my experiences as an American citizen-soldier and former South African resident to the process. My intent was to address both the social and defense issues regarding continued transformation of the SANDF.

Chapter II of this thesis deals with the evolution and social aspects leading to the negotiated transition in South Africa. Chapter III describes the status and situation of the SANDF and the goals for future structure. Chapter IV addresses Reserve Force options. Chapter V concludes by recommending a restructuring and change in the existing Reserve Force policy.

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II. GHOSTS IN THE FUTURE

Reserve forces require the support of citizens and government to establish legitimacy but in South Africa, fractionalization and apartheid memories debilitate the civil-military relationship. This chapter will reveal that negotiations in South Africa involved factional sub-negotiations between whites and Africans and that the negotiations affected other agencies, specifically the military. The chapter addresses five topics:

- The history of apartheid and the beginning of organized black resistance;
- International influence;
- The formal negotiations and transition to a free election;
- The organization of the post-apartheid state; and
- Post-transition problems and the transition's impact on the South African military.

A. Apartheid Foundation and Black Resistance

The purpose of discussing the origins of apartheid is threefold.

- Whites disagreed during the 1990 negotiations over the regime transition.
- African opposition to apartheid grew as the government implemented its racial policy.
- Afrikaner elitism under apartheid united military, police, and government agencies, which in turn, attempted to block a negotiated settlement of black political participation.

The term Apartheid comes from Afrikaans word meaning “apartness.” In the 1920s and 1930s, the term reflected a desire for white development and the removal of

English South Africans from positions of power. The largely agrarian Afrikaners believed that the English dominated businesses and that government positions filled by Englishmen discriminated against them. Further, the “armed force was used more frequently against white workers and Afrikaners than against blacks.”¹ The election of Daniel Francois Malan’s National Party in 1948 was the result of an Afrikaner coalition with two specific agendas; ensure Afrikaner control of the military and government and maintain white control of South Africa. “Afrikaners were deeply worried about the state of race relations. Nearly all believed that the state should do more to maintain white supremacy and the “purity” of the “white” race.”² The transition of apartheid from an idea to action was immediate.

The National Party laid the foundation of apartheid in 1950 with the passage of the Population Registration Act, which classified people by race; the Group Areas Act, which forced people to reside in racially zoned areas; and the Immorality Act, which created legal boundaries between the races by making marriage and sexual relations across color lines illegal. The repeal of these acts was a key step in the negotiation process. Further, the election of the National Party virtually excluded the English from political and military power. “Afrikaner hegemony was extended over senior posts in the civil service and armed forces, from which a number of English were unceremoniously retired.”³ In the eyes of Afrikaners, control of the government was its manifest destiny.

¹ Merle Lipton, Capitalism and Apartheid, (London:Gower, 1985) 262.

² Lipton, 283.

³ Ibid.

This Afrikaner perspective led to the creation of an apartheid system that eliminated black participation and ensured that Afrikaners dominated the political process.

Bolstered by the National Party dominated Parliament, the military became a key element in Afrikaner pride and equality. In the early stages of apartheid, some military personnel objected to the treatment of Africans. For a short time, a few World War II veterans used two organizations that opposed racial segregation — the War Veteran's Torch Commando and the Springbok Legion — to lobby for African equality. However, Afrikaner politics soon influenced the organizations and after a protest march on Parliament turned violent, the Torch Commandos closed their doors to non-white members in 1951.⁴ Nevertheless, in the early stages of the apartheid government, the military worked with the South African Police Service (SAPS) to enforce apartheid policy.

As the apartheid government strengthened, so too did black resistance. Unfortunately, the Africans lacked an organized armed military or a legitimate institutional way to overcome their disadvantaged position. Further, in 1951, the apartheid government abolished the Natives Representation Council, an advisory body established in 1936 that had little success in getting redress for African grievances with the white government.⁵ To Africans, apartheid left little opportunity for equality. An attempt by anti-apartheid groups comprised of the African National Congress (ANC), South African Indian Congress (SAIC), and the Congress of Democrats, to sign a

⁴ Annette Seegers, The Military in the Making of Modern South Africa (New York: Tauris Academic Studies 1996) 93.

⁵ Christopher Saunders, ed., Historical Dictionary of South Africa (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2000) 190.

Freedom Charter in 1955 resulted in 156 of its members charged with high treason. In 1960, the Pan-African Congress (PAC) peacefully protested the pass-laws, which required each African to carry an identification passbook at all times. The protest in Sharpsville ended tragically with 67 killed, many shot in the back, by members of the SAPS, and resulted a government ban of all African political organizations. Banishing political organizations in 1960 left little hope for a democratic and peaceful solution to South African inequality.

B. International Influence

The Soweto Uprising in 1976 marks the beginning of apartheid's demise and greater state utilization of Commandos against black citizens. It began as a revolt by schoolchildren in Soweto, a township south of Johannesburg, against the government's insistence that African schools use Afrikaans to teach. This protest soon spread throughout the country. The ANC, banned in 1960, used the revolt to foster ideas about black consciousness. In retaliation, the government called out SAPS and military personnel to stop the revolt. By the protest's end in 1977, the security forces had shot an estimated 600 people, most of them teenagers. Steve Biko, founder of the South African Student Organization and leader of the black consciousness movement, died while in police custody. Now fearing the security forces and fueled by Biko's death, thousands of Africans fled abroad and joined a growing struggle for liberation. The harsh tactics of security forces led to international condemnation and a United Nations (UN) arms embargo against South Africa in spring 1977. South Africans seriously questioned the

apartheid regime's legitimacy.⁶ With international awareness of the condition of Africans in South Africa growing, the liberation movement strengthened both inside and outside South Africa. Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), the militant wing of the ANC established in 1961, continued to train freedom fighters outside South Africa's borders. Joined by members of the PAC and other political exiles, the MK prepared Africans for an armed struggle, while it conducted small-scale attacks against the apartheid regime. The white government did not think the ANC led the opposition in 1976, but with the influx of newly trained *guerillas*, this perception changed.⁷

International pressure and increased attacks—both more frequent and aggressive—by MK groups forced the South African government to acknowledge a need for change. In 1986, South African President Pieter Willem Botha declared a state of emergency in South Africa and thought the growing opposition required a military solution. He had been Minister of Defense from 1966 to 1978 and had built the South African army into the most formidable military machine in Africa. He claimed that the international community was waging a “total onslaught” against South Africa and gave the military a major say in the government.⁸ To many observers Botha was a “militarist,” because of his blunt action, limited collegiality, and long association with the military.⁹ Declaring a state of emergency simply reinforced this perception.

Botha's strategy was to divide and conquer. He and the NP leadership believed that the government institutions, supported by the military and security forces, could

⁶ Christopher Saunders, 241.

⁷ Seegers, 174.

⁸ Leonard Thompson, A History of South Africa (New Haven: Yale University Press) 224.

⁹ Seegers, 169.

divide, co-opt, and neutralize the ANC and the anti-apartheid struggle.¹⁰ Under the guise of counter-insurgency operations (COIN) and the support of the 1983 constitution, which dramatically increased the executive power of the State President, the military and SAPS conducted township raids. Parliamentary oversight was minimal because the Minister of Defense reported directly to the State President. As a result, military personnel kept Parliamentarians out of defense affairs because they believed political involvement supported South Africa's enemies.¹¹ The NP portrayed the ANC and the South African Communist Party (SACP) as evil.

As violence by the security forces increased under the state of emergency so too did armed acts by the MK against the white government and establishment. The state of emergency made whites prisoners of their own political system and dependent on Commandos and the South African Defence Force (SADF) for protection. Further, as the state of emergency spread, foreign businesses began to systematically leave South Africa and international banks called in short term loans. Several world powers, including the United States, placed sanctions on South Africa because of its apartheid policy, which in turn, created inflation, economic instability, and made South Africa a pariah state. South Africa was heading for bloodshed and Botha was leading the charge.

To improve South Africa's world standing and gain English-speaking South Africans' support, Botha made several nominal concessions without sacrificing Afrikaner power.

- He tried to neutralize South Africa's neighbors.

¹⁰ Timothy Sisk, Democratization in South Africa (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995) 70.

¹¹ Seegers, 192 & 195.

- He scrapped apartheid symbols and practices not needed to maintain white supremacy.
- He sought to win the cooperation of big business, to intensify the ethnic and class cleavages among citizens, and to suppress domestic dissidents.
- He attempted to legalize formerly illegal democratically organized labor unions that had become a form of internal African and white-activist protest.

Parliament passed a new constitution giving Coloureds and Indians voting rights within the apartheid system, but it still excluded blacks from the political process and it maintained executive veto privileges.¹² In January 1985, speaking in Parliament, Botha offered to free Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners on three specific conditions: the ANC would renounce violence, the ANC would break from the SACP, and the ANC would abandon the majority rule principle; an offer Mandela refused, because he and his colleagues would have remained prisoners by apartheid.¹³

Seeking to avoid an all out war between whites and Africans and preserve economic interests, members of Botha's cabinet and business leaders conducted secret meetings with banned and imprisoned political leaders including Mandela in various world locations. The initial meetings held some promise, but also illustrated how far apart Africans and Afrikaners really were. In 1986, during the first meeting of representatives of the apartheid establishment and exiled officials of the ANC in New York, Seretse Choabe, an African freedom fighter, vowed to shoot Pieter de Lange, an Afrikaner patriot, in front of 40 witnesses. "In coming to New York, both sides had

¹² Thompson, 224-6.

¹³ Johannes Rantete & Giliomee, "Transition to Democracy through Transaction," African Affairs, vol. 91 as cited by Sisk, 72.

violated the chief political commandment of the day, that the ANC should meet the Afrikaner only on the field of battle.”¹⁴

While the secret meetings took place at home and abroad, random acts of violence against the white establishment continued, but under the state of emergency, the South African press could not fully report the severity of the events. When the state-controlled press did cover the story it portrayed random acts of violence as black-on-black, but the international press portrayed the same acts as white versus black.¹⁵ By 1989, Afrikaners support of Botha and his policy waned, the National Party received 52 percent of the popular majority votes in the 1987 election and South Africa’s citizens had begun to experience the economic hardships wrought by international sanctions. The Afrikaner *Broederbond* – a highly influential secret society established in 1919 that promoted the cause of Afrikaner nationalism and the NP – led by Pieter de Lange, began promoting a move away from apartheid.¹⁶ Even high ranking officials in Botha’s administration felt “it [was] now time to sit down with the [ANC] with whom [Boers] were in conflict, and thrash out something we can all live with.”¹⁷ With increased division among the ruling elites, the *status quo* was no longer a viable option in South Africa.

¹⁴ Patti Waldmeir, *Anatomy of a Miracle* (New York: WW Norton and Co., 1997) 63.

¹⁵ Marina Ottaway, *South Africa: the Struggle for a New Order*, (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1993) 11.

¹⁶ Christopher Saunders, 8.

¹⁷ Mike Louw head of South African Secret Service under Botha as quoted in Waldmeir, 50.

C. Negotiation and Transition to a Free Election

When Frederick Willem de Klerk became President on 14 August 1989 following Botha's resignation, he was well aware of the current situation facing the apartheid government. As leader of the white minority, de Klerk had three options:

- Continue the state of emergency and military enforcement of apartheid; thus enslaving whites to an unjust and archaic government;
- Turn over the government and the future of the country to Africans, thus seeking the same outcome as Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and other post-colonial independent African nations; and
- Seek a negotiated settlement with blacks, thus continuing white participation in the government and guiding South Africa into the twenty-first century.

With both Afrikaner reservation and personal foresight, de Klerk selected option three.

De Klerk faced a difficult task in presenting a united front, because any action he took towards negotiation meant upsetting the fragile Boer state. To the international observer, the South African issue was straightforward, but to Afrikaner's; it was a matter of survival. Politically the Conservative Party (CP) challenged the NP, which had English supporters. The Conservative Party broke away after the 1983 constitution included Coloureds and right-wing Afrikaner groups like the Afrikaners Resistance Movement (AWV), who opposed any concession to Africans, in the political process. Both advocated the establishment of a separate Afrikaner homeland. Further, the state of emergency had taken its toll on the military and security service. English-speakers among others resisted the longstanding practice of conscription because of the "price it

asked of young men.”¹⁸ With economic conditions worsening for whites, the cost of a continued state of emergency was less and less attractive. De Klerk finally realized that the NP and ANC were at a stalemate and the benefits of negotiation far outweighed the costs.¹⁹ On 13 December 1989, de Klerk met with Mandela for the first time to discuss preconditions for negotiation. The first meeting was somewhat awkward, but they agreed to work together, in a marriage of convenience, not love.²⁰

On 2 February 1990, de Klerk announced to the shock of Afrikaners and the cheers of the international community and Africans alike that the state would lift the bans on the ANC, PAC, and SACP and release Mandela from prison. As de Klerk opened the door to negotiation, the CP and AWB viewed the action as surrendering to the enemy and the end of South Africa. De Klerk did not intend to simply deign to majority rule, but to ensure the futures of whites in South Africa by taking the first steps toward rapprochement. A week after the announcement, de Klerk met with Mandela the second time to plan Mandela’s 11 February release after 27 years in prison.

As de Klerk attempted to reconcile whites, Mandela faced similar challenges as he attempted to reconcile blacks. The ANC operated outside of South Africa’s borders for 30 years and represented an establishment devoted to liberation comprised of various factions, but united by skin color. Like whites, blacks also had extremist groups of varying ideologies. The leftist PAC had a slogan of “*one bullet, one settler*” and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) was opposed to ANC representation of Zulus. To complete

¹⁸ Seegers, 196.

¹⁹ Ibid, 245.

²⁰ Waldmeir, 148.

the transition from movement to political party, the ANC would have to lower its expectations of what its role would be in the future South Africa.²¹ On 16 February 1990, the ANC formally agreed to direct talks with the de Klerk government.

The first formal meeting occurred in May 1990 and concluded with the signing of a negotiated pact. The *Groote Schuur Minute* sought to clear obstacles that stood in the way of negotiations; in particular, those relating to the release of political prisoners. The *Pretoria Minute* did likewise on 6-7 August 1990. These negotiations formally ended armed actions and related activities by the ANC or MK, which was a requirement by the de Klerk administration for further negotiation.²²

Mandela's ANC party met violent resistance from IFP supporters in Natal and by September, the violence spread into townships near Johannesburg. The IFP leader Buthelezi broke from the ANC in 1979 choosing to accept apartheid homeland *sovereignty*. By 1989, IFP supporters engaged in a low-intensity civil war against the United Democratic Front (UDF) and ANC supporters. IFP and ANC clashes led to increased civil unrest, which adversely affected negotiations. Mandela desperately needed to unite Africans and on 31 January 1991, joint ANC-IFP delegations met in Durban, marking the first meeting of Mandela and Buthelezi in 28 years. The meeting attempted to unite the ANC and IFP, however "while there may have been mutual recognition at the top, there simply was not the support of the accord from below."²³ Perhaps intending to bring Africans closer under the ANC, Mandela withdrew from

²¹ Ottaway, 44.

²² Christopher Saunders, 117 & 211.

²³ Sisk, 100.

negotiations on 18 May 1991 because de Klerk was reluctant to release all political prisoners.²⁴ To relieve international sanctions and economic pressures, de Klerk removed the apartheid government's cornerstones by repealing the Population Registration Act on 17 June 1991. The move created a climate for negotiations to continue.

As the ANC and IFP continued to negotiate, peripheral groups fought to remain intact. A group representing religious and business leaders actively pursued representation, which resulted in a National Peace Accord on 14 September. The Afrikaner dominated military and security services attempted to maintain control of the state, but violence, social unrest, and internal political views made it difficult to identify the enemy. For example, in protest to the Peace Accord violence between various African groups erupted near Johannesburg resulting in 121 deaths and 550 wounded. Black members of the SAPS found themselves targeted by these groups as white sympathizers. As negotiations were reshaping South Africa's future, protection of the force and civilians became a complex task. The increased violence and uncertain future alarmed white citizens, but in March of 1992, they voted overwhelmingly (67.8 percent) to back de Klerk's reforms and continued negotiations.²⁵ The ANC and NP both realized and feared that CP sympathizers in the military and security forces could disrupt reform, if they wanted. "Mandela had visions of right-wing Afrikaners – heavily armed, trained, and already organized in local militia units of the SANDF – rising up to prevent the elections."²⁶

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Waldmeir, 238.

In August 1992, members of the ANC, NP, CP and PAC agreed to attend reconvened multiparty talks. By September, they reached a Record of Understanding, which charted the transition's future and included the following:

- An elected constituent assembly would serve as interim Parliament;
- A new constitution would be drafted;
- The Assembly would be bound by principles agreed to by CODESA;
- The Assembly would have “deadlock-breaking mechanisms;” and
- An interim government would be established comprised of “national and regional government”²⁷

During the talks, members of the IFP and white right-wing groups formed the Concerned South Africans Group (COSAG). COSAG opposed the Record of Understanding because it recognized that if new regime portrayed its members as extremists, it would exclude them from political power.²⁸ The government negotiated with the IFP, but in February 1993, it failed to win IFP backing of the power-sharing arrangement.²⁹

The next step in the negotiation process was to implement Record of Understanding. Actors established the Multiparty Negotiating Process (MPNP) in the spring of 1993 after Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) failed to unite negotiations. The MPNP included 26 registered political parties that sought to draft the interim constitution and establish the 27 April 1994 election date.³⁰ The IFP and COSAG allies objected to the election date and in July of 1993, the IFP withdrew from the MPNP. For Buthelezi, “Inkatha had little incentive to turn into a democratic political party. Zulu

²⁷ Record of Understanding, 26 September 1992 (Washington D.C.: Embassy of the Republic of South Africa).

²⁸ Sisk, 303.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Sisk, 224-6.

nationalism was a better card.”³¹ Armed right-wing white terrorists attacked MPNP. These terrorists “despised their president even more than they hated Mandela. They believed de Klerk had betrayed the Afrikaner nation.”³² On 25 June 1993, armed militants stormed the MPNP, which increased political violence throughout South Africa. By November of 1993 the ANC, its allies, and the National Party signed a peace agreement. However, the agreement did not include the white right wing or IFP, both of which demanded a separate peace. ³³

In late 1993, the international community lifted economic sanctions and presented de Klerk and Mandela with the Nobel Peace Prize for their ability to negotiate stability in South Africa. However, the enforcement of free elections fell to the military and security services. Civil-unrest seemed at an all-time high just before the elections. Rioting in the former homeland of Bophuthatswana and attacks by IFP marchers against the ANC headquarters in downtown Johannesburg left nearly a hundred dead, and forced the government to declare a state of emergency in KwaZulu. The security forces that maintained control over apartheid subjects now had to ensure their safety and access to vote. The military had to deal with the idea that “while good soldiers were entitled to believe that the ANC should not be trusted, their obedience to political command was at stake...which touched their own claim of being apolitical.”³⁴ Despite the civil-unrest, the military performed its duty admirably, assisting elderly, establishing voting centers, and

³¹ Ottaway, 192.

³² Waldmeir, 237.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Seegers, 317.

maintaining security at election sites. On April 27 1994, voters elected the ANC's Nelson Mandela as leader and president.

D. The Post-apartheid South African State

South Africa is a parliamentary democracy whose highest and most important law of the land is the Constitution, which took effect on 4 February 1997. The Constitution outlines government structured at national, provincial, and local levels with powers of legislative, executive, and judicial authorities separate from one another (Figure 2.1).

With the second election in 1999, the South African state is well on the way to consolidation, but many hurdles remain including social and infrastructure issues and institutional overhauls. The retirement of Mandela from politics in June of 1999 marks the “end of the beginning,” for the post-apartheid South African state. The second democratic election saw the ANC increase its majority to 66 percent, and launched South Africa into the post-Mandela era. Today, South Africans, regardless of ethnic background, maintain control of the state through a parliamentary democratic process. The ANC holds the 266 of the 398 seats, however thirteen other parties also received seats in the National Assembly.³⁵ The pattern of politics within the state remains largely along racial lines. With the election of Mbeki, the ANC crushed its old radical rivals for the black vote and consolidated its position as an allegedly racial party, which causes some uneasiness among those who fear the rise of ruthless Africanist tendencies. The

³⁵ South Africa Yearbook 1999, 35.

two main opposition parties concerned are the Pan African Congress (PAC) and the Azanian People's Organization (AZAPO).³⁶

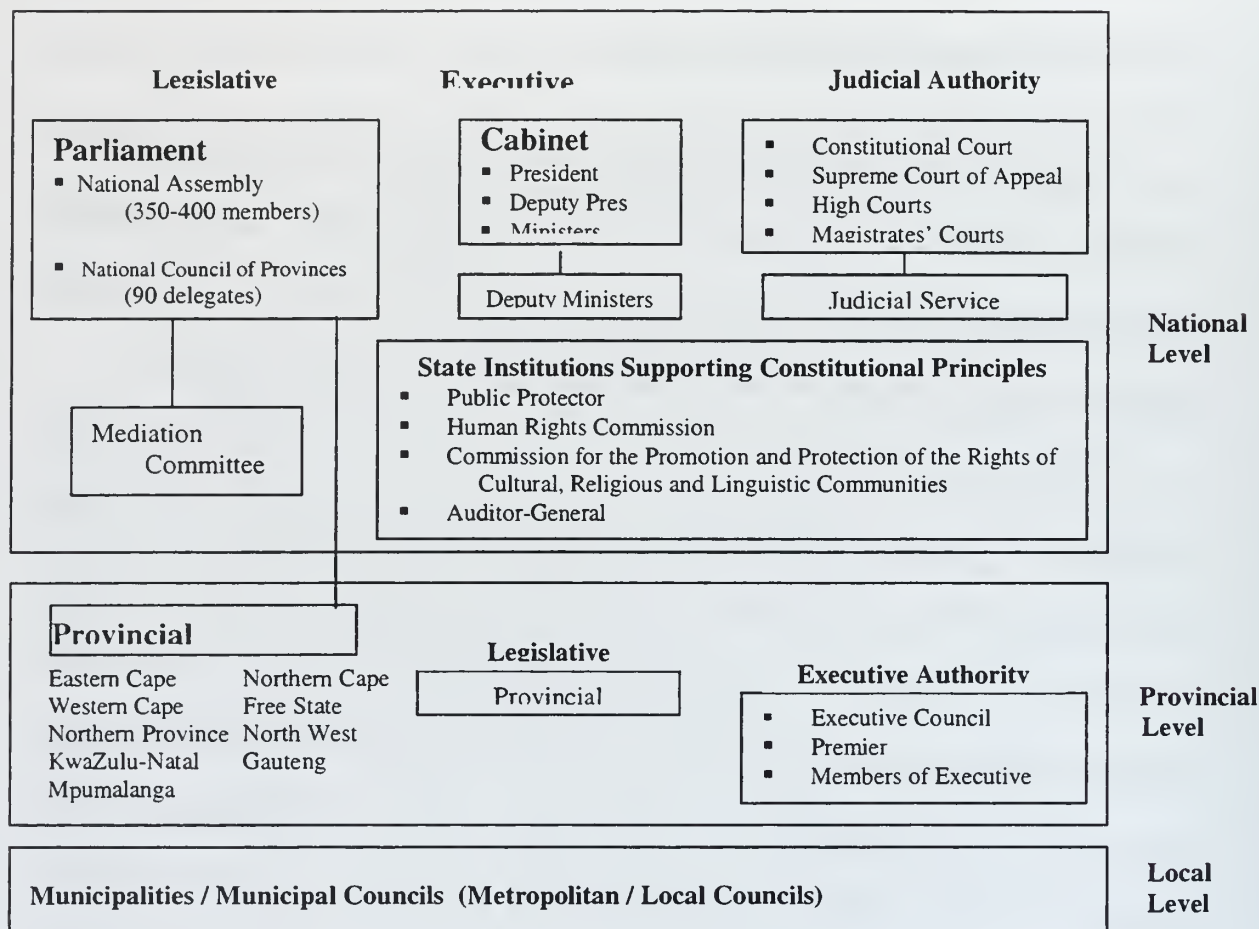


Figure 2.1 – Structure and Function of the South African Government

The state must ensure compliance of the four core tasks as stated in the Preamble to the Constitution. These functions are as follows:

- Heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights;

³⁶ William Gutteridge, *South Africa: Potential of Mbeki's Presidency*, Research Institute for the Study of Conflict, (Conflict Studies 319/320: Jun 1999), 21.

- Improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person;
- Lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by law; and
- Build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations.³⁷

Internally, the government has integrated existing institutions and in many cases redesigned them to include Africans in the political process. Externally, the focus remains on attracting foreign investments, which has been slow due largely to the civil unrest in many South African cities; continued African renaissance, inclusion into the global community and regional democratic peace building by inclusion in the Southern African Development Community (SADC). It is these internal and external challenges that influence the future force structures.

E. Future Problems Beyond Transition

The negotiations in South Africa had a simple premise: Africans could not have an all African South Africa and whites could not exclude Africans from the political process. After the negotiations, each party and internal state-institutions began to reform. Although democracy prevailed, various factions remained in the provinces: “the repudiation of apartheid did not mean the end of racial divisions... [Voters] still cast their ballots largely along racial and ethnic lines.”³⁸

³⁷ Preamble to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996.

³⁸ Rita M. Byrnes, ed., South Africa: a country study (Headquarters Department of the Army, 1997) xlvii.

The military's transition included incorporation of members of the MK, IFP, and homeland militias groups that had been the enemy became members of the new South African National Defense Force (formerly SADF).³⁹ From 1995 to 1998, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission provided an opportunity for South Africans to publicly admit the human rights violations that occurred between 1960 and 1994 under the apartheid system and granted amnesty to violators including military, security force, liberation, and government personnel.⁴⁰ For South Africa to move forward it had to deal with the past. Nevertheless, removing South Africa's legacy of apartheid and changing longstanding beliefs is a long-term process that requires the sustained commitment of the nation's leaders and its people, many of whom are members of disparate groups.

White society, which historically viewed itself as pseudo-European and enjoyed European prosperity under apartheid, has realized that it must now deal with traditional African issues. These issues include balanced education, employment, health services, crime, and domestic investment. Since the first election in 1994, the society has undergone significant challenges. Unemployment among Africans is 50 percent; among whites, it is 10 percent.⁴¹ African access to education and healthcare is far less than that of whites. Every government agency has integrated across racial lines and, with the addition of Africans in the political process, begun to remove the racist perceptions wrought by apartheid. Perhaps the most remarkable impact of the transition is that the military and security services, which enforced apartheid policies by violent means, now

³⁹ James Winkates, "The transformation of the South African National Defense Force," Armed Forces and Society, Spring 2000.

⁴⁰ Antjie Krog, Country of My Skull (South Africa: Random House, 1998) ix.

⁴¹ World Fact Book 2000

protect all South Africans. Nevertheless, continued integration, force reduction, and mission changes continue to challenge the military. The legitimacy of the military and security forces depends on their ability to replace personnel who will not adapt to change.⁴²

⁴² Seegers, 321.

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III. CURRENT FORCE STRUCTURE

Apartheid has affected the current relationship between the military and society. Following the NP negotiated concession of power to the ANC in 1994; the apartheid military was one of the first government institutions to undergo radical redirection. Today, the Department of Defense is in the midst of a second comprehensive transformation of its design, structure and force levels and is using business principles and practices to do so. The *White Paper on Defense* and a major *Defence Review Process* are the transformation's cornerstones.⁴³

The long-term recommendation of the Ministry of Defense (MoD) was a SA peacetime force of 36,000 full-time and 98,000 Reserve Force members. An acceptable and more constrained option is 22,000 full-time and 70,000 Reserve members. These figures incorporate only combat personnel, not combat service support and service support personnel.⁴⁴ This chapter will address the new South African National Defense Force (SANDF); the force that superceded the South African Defense Force (SADF) and the Ministry of Defense after the initial restructuring that started in 1990. The chapter will address

- The South African Department of Defense;
- Challenges facing the current force structure;
- Integration of the military and homeland defense and elements;
- SANDF's role and mission today;

⁴³ For example, *South Africa Yearbook 1999*, compiled and edited by the Government Communication and Information System (Pretoria, 1999) 257.

⁴⁴ Defence Review, 45.

- Structural concepts, and
- Challenges to the existing reserves.

A. The South African Department of Defense

Beginning in 1990, government has decreased the Defense budget annually. Current defense expenditure represents less than 2 percent of GDP, down from the apartheid average of 16 percent.⁴⁵ These changes in government spending and allocation have been the driving force behind reorganization and transformation within the Department of Defence (DoD). According to the *Defence Review* the DoD must "... achieve maximum cost efficiency yet ensure effectiveness."⁴⁶ The vision for the next four to ten years is appropriation of resources to be 40 percent on personnel, 30 percent on operation, and 30 percent on capital renewal.⁴⁷ At present, there is no appropriation set aside for the Reserve Force.

The DoD strategy to ensure the protection of the State and its people includes the following:

- Political, economic and military cooperation with other states and the prevention, management and resolution of conflict through non-violent means;
- South Africa will turn to military means only when deterrence and non-violent strategies have failed;
- Ensure the existence of a defense capability which is sufficiently credible to inhibit potential aggressors; and

⁴⁵ Ibid, 381.

⁴⁶ Defence Review 1998, 76.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 77.

- Ensure a core defense capability with the ability to expand to appropriate force levels.⁴⁸

With the transition from apartheid to democracy, the government established the primary goal of civilian control of the military, but the reorganization is not complete. During the apartheid era, the Department of Defense (DoD) operated with little parliamentary oversight, with the Defense Headquarters performing most of its functions. In the interests of entrenching democratic civil-military relations, the Defense Amendment Act of 1995 provided for a restructured DoD, which comprises the SANDF and civilian Defense Secretariat.⁴⁹ Figure 3.1 illustrates the *current* organizational structure in accordance with the *Defence Review*.⁵⁰

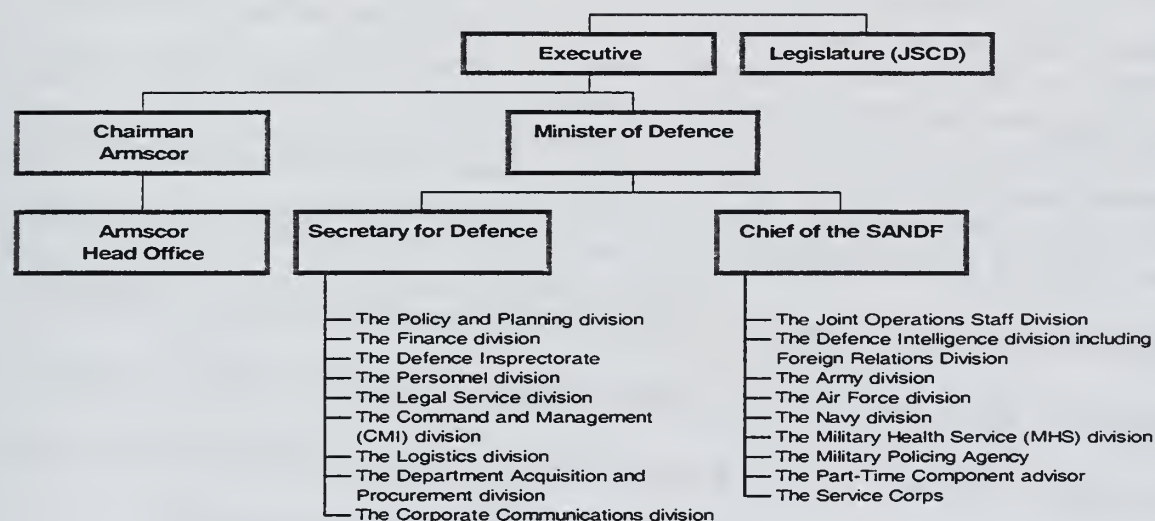


Figure 3.1 Organizational Structure of the Department of Defense South Africa
South African Defence Review 1998, 53.

⁴⁸ White Paper on Defence, 13.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 9.

⁵⁰ At the time of this publication, the organizational and relationship structure was still in the final phases of approval. The information used in the paper represents that already published in the Defence Review 1998.

Today, the military consists of four specialized and combined services – Army, Air Force, Navy, and the Military Health Service – collectively known as the South African National Defense Force (SANDF). The President is the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, while the administrative responsibility is a function of the Defense Minister, whom the President appoints President. The President also appoints the chief of the armed forces from one of the four military branches. The SANDF chief is accountable to the Minister of Defense, who is a civilian.⁵¹

Evidence that military has already assumed some of the missions designed to improve social perceptions is apparent. Before the elections, the military distributed ballots and set up voting stations in many of the homelands and provinces. Other elements, within the services, have assisted police in fighting drug traffic, quelling social unrest, and providing back up support to police missions.⁵² However, although the missions have changed, the elements resemble apartheid forces in name and uniform. Even though in the new democracy, they are “here to help,” units like Commandos, conjure fear and distaste among the African civilian population, because of apartheid brutalities. This distrust creates challenges regarding legitimacy within the military ranks, state, and society. The Reserve Force will have to overcome these past perceptions of military personnel and elite-specialized units if it is to succeed.⁵³

⁵¹ Rita M. Byrnes, ed., 177.

⁵² Jakkie Cilliers, et.al.

⁵³ Interviews with Lekoa Solomon Mollo, COL SANDF (NPS: March 2000).

B. Challenges Facing the Current Force Structure

South Africa has attempted to institute greater civilian control of the military and reduced its size while inculcating a greater sense of military professionalism. This design of the re-engineering effort is to improve the MoD's capacity to efficiently meet the country's security requirements within budget and policy constraints.⁵⁴ A difficult challenge is creating a military that reflects the country's social demographics. The military's history, especially during the Botha years, coupled with the observation that civil-military relations mirror the society and political regime in which they develop, makes this a difficult task.

The military should reflect South Africa's racial make-up, but that is not the case. The SANDF has moved closer to a more representative military, but as figure 3.2 illustrates, the proportion of whites and blacks in the military does not accord with their proportions in the total population. Further, racially integrating the military forces developed under apartheid created more challenges.

⁵⁴ South African Yearbook 1999, 258.

Percentage of Total Population Partitioned by Race and Percentage in the Ministry of
Defence (MoD) Personnel

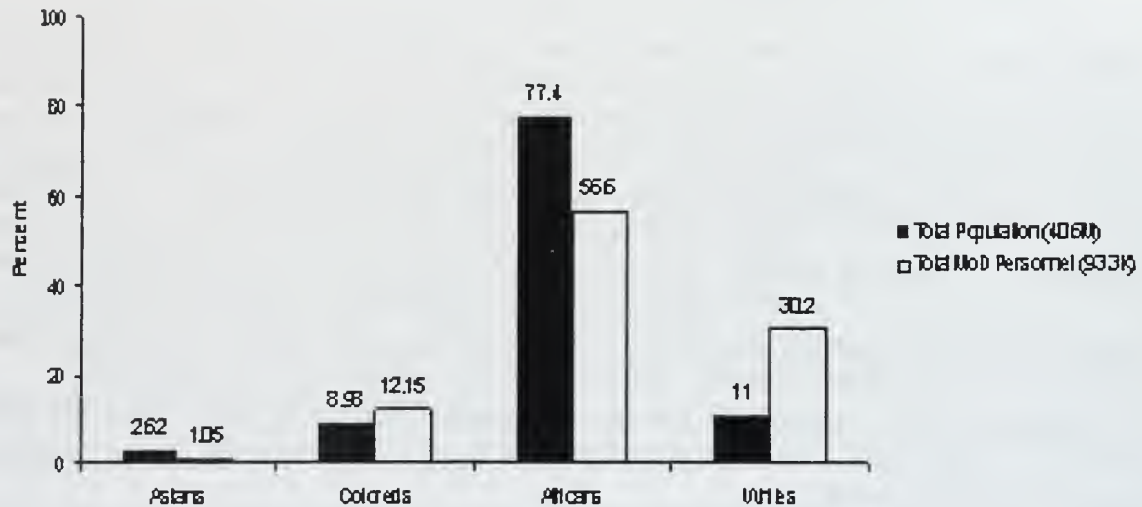


Figure 3.2 Percentage of Total Population Partitioned by Race and Percentage in the Ministry of Defense (MoD) Personnel
South Africa Yearbook 1999.

C. Integration of the Separate Militaries

Since 26 April 1994, the DoD has been incorporating seven former forces and the Kwa-Zulu Self Protection Force into one SANDF. The government created an Integration Committee (IC), comprised of representatives from all service arms, former forces, and functional staff divisions to oversee the integration process. Under the terms of Section 224 and 236 of the Interim Constitution (1993), the following groups comprised SANDF when it was established.

- Members of the South African Defense Force (SADF);
- Members of any defense force forming part of a national territory, i.e., the former Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda, and Ciskei defense forces; and

- Members of a defense force or armed force of a political organization, which included Um Khonto we Sizwe (MK) and the Azanian Peoples' Liberation Army (APLA).⁵⁵

These militaries were adversaries under apartheid, but during the transition, they treated each other professionally. Of the 28,000-registered MK and 6,000 APLA members, of the total force, 16,000 accepted integration, while 9,330 members of the SADF — 7,000 whites — opted for demobilization and accepted severance packages.⁵⁶ Ensuring the force's racial equality in the various units is difficult, but is proceeding.

The South African government used two systems, *Rationalization* and *Retrenchment*, to incorporate the different forces and manpower and personnel changes to achieve a force capable of meeting the country's security requirements. This has been a difficult task. The *Personnel Rationalization Strategy for the DoD*, states that an individual must meet certain criteria to qualify for retrenchment. These criteria include:

- *Individual Experience.* The member's level of expertise and past work performance; these two criteria should be applied as a last resort and not as the main criteria when considering an individual for retrenchment.
- *Course Requirements.* An individual receives two chances to successfully complete all the required courses for his or her present rank.
- *Physical and Psychological Abilities.* This refers to the extent to which an individual's skills meet the requirements of a specific job.
- *Disciplinary Record;* Based on type, seriousness, frequency, surrounding circumstances, and impact on work performance.
- *Domestic Circumstances.* These include member status, management of married couples, financial position of member, and normal age distribution within the personnel structure.

⁵⁵ Defence White Paper, 69-70.

⁵⁶ Winkates, 463.

In six years, this process has enabled the DoD to reduce personnel by nearly 35 percent.⁵⁷ However, according to the Defense Minister Mosiuoa Lekota, “the process has taken much longer than was originally anticipated. Integration has been both a complicated and sensitive process, fraught with difficulties, but overall it has been successful.”⁵⁸ Further, as illustrated in Figure 3.3, an imbalance remains between the various forces, which has led to internal military problems. Lekota continues to support *rationalization* but critics like former Chief of the SADF, Johan Pretorius, characterized *rationalization* as a “no-win situation for the SANDF: there will be a loss of expertise if former members of the SADF are released, and a loss of legitimacy if former non-statutory forces are discharged.”⁵⁹

Among the more obvious challenges associated with the integration process is the senior leadership’s racial makeup. While Africans have long served in the UDF, SADF, and SANDF, whites have always dominated the senior leadership positions. According Mr. Lekota, between 70 and 80 percent of the officers in the SANDF came from the former SADF, where whites filled senior posts. Mr. Lekota and senior cabinet members have sought qualified Africans to fill top positions, but since the apartheid state denied Africans access to appropriate education opportunities under apartheid, filling these positions will take time. In reality, if the government remains committed to a racially proportioned military, white soldiers will be the ones discharged.

⁵⁷ According to IOL, since 1994, soldiers from the non-statutory forces as MK and APLA had joined the SANDF. The state then trimmed the huge force from 120,00 to 75,000 members.

⁵⁸ Taken from “Lekota: Defence Budget Vote 2000/01, National Assembly, 7 April 2000,” (Pretoria) 3.

⁵⁹ The statement originally appeared in the first Draft White Paper (1995), p. 32, and later referenced in Winkates, 463.

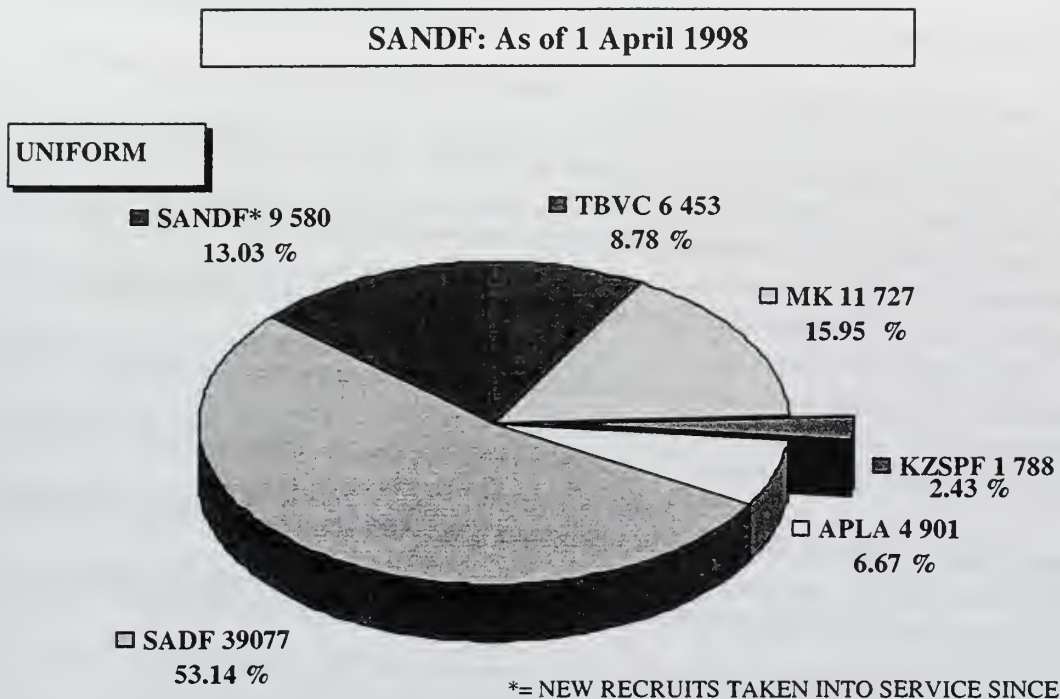


Figure 3.3 Schematic Representation of Integrated SANDF as on 1 April 1998.
Defence Review, 70.

According to the 1998 *Defence Review*, there are 183 senior leadership positions (Brigadier General, Major General, Lieutenant General, and General) and only 41 positions filled by non-whites - 40 by Africans, and 1 by a Colored.⁶⁰ In 1998, the SANDF introduced “fast tracking” for members who have the potential to qualify sooner than would normally be the case, “fast-tracking” has led to placing suitable members in a succession of posts to gain the necessary experience.⁶¹ In the past two years, more Africans fill top positions, but the change in leadership has alienated some military

⁶⁰ *Defence Review*, 71.

⁶¹ *Ibid*, 72.

members. In an address to soldiers at the SANDF's Support Base in Pietersburg in North West after the killing of a Major by a fellow soldier, Mr. Lekota was uneasy about the percentage of apartheid era officers in the current SANDF. He questioned the SANDF's practice of basing their force structure on whether service members were in the statutory or non-statutory forces. To him, this distinction was unacceptable. He said the following to his detractors, "Soldiers who do not feel loyal to the black command structure of the army should leave and go elsewhere."⁶² According to the *South African Defence Union*, the largest military union in Africa, one challenge produced by the discharge of former soldiers, is that many of the estimated 40,000 soldiers that left the military in the past six years have turned to crime to survive.

The Minister of Defense launched the Service Corps on 31 January 1995, as an auxiliary service to the SANDF. Its mission was "assisting in the reintegration of ex-service members into civil society by upgrading the standard of education, vocational and life skills to enable members to find employment or start their own enterprise in the private sector and career guidance on a continuous basis."⁶³ However, with only 137 full-time employees, the program has had difficulty in dealing with the large number of customers, lack of funding, and high civilian unemployment rates. Future reductions in end strength due to reutilization and rationalization require a more effective method of transition.

⁶² IOL, "Lekota: SANDF full of apartheid-era officers," 17 JUL 00 and "Serve black command or quit Lekota warns," 17 AUG 00.

⁶³ Defence Review, 90.

D. Role and Mission of the SANDF

According to the South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996), “The primary object of the Defence Force is to defend and protect the Republic, its territorial integrity and its people in accordance with the Constitution and the principles of international law regulating the use of force.”⁶⁴ The Constitution does not clearly state secondary objectives or functions of the SANDF but, according to Transitional Arrangements, the state may employ the SANDF in the following areas:

- The defense of the Republic, for the protection of its sovereignty and territorial integrity;
- Compliance with the international obligations of the Republic with regard to international bodies and other states;
- Preservation of life, health, or property;
- The provision or maintenance of essential services;
- Upholding law and order in the Republic in cooperation with the South African Police Service under circumstances set out in law where the Police Service is unable to maintain law and order on its own; and
- Support of any department of state for the purpose of socio-economic improvement.⁶⁵

The provision that the SANDF “*may be employed*” has stimulated open debates as to what the military’s force structure should be. Anti-military supporters argue that today’s pressing need for social spending on such crucial issues as health, education, housing, crime and violence, the instability and high level of intra-state conflict, and the apparent

⁶⁴ Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996. Act No. 108 of 1996 Chapter 11 Section 200 (2).

⁶⁵ Interim Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1993. Act No. 200 of 1993 Chapter 14 Section 227 (1).

absence of a clearly defined military threat to South Africa.⁶⁶ As the debate continues, the SANDF struggles with unclear mission requirements both internally and externally.

The importance of South Africans cannot disregard their role in the security of Southern Africa as a whole. The SANDF continues to train for peacekeeping operations. Following 1998 peace operations in Lesotho by members of the SANDF and the Botswana Defense Force under the auspices of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), neighboring states have increasingly requested assistance in training and support in peacekeeping operations from South Africa; most recently the Congo.⁶⁷ The SANDF's strengths include expertise in communications, mine clearing, command and control, and medical support strengths, which would support future peacekeeping deployments. The democracies in Southern Africa are fragile and the need for a small well-trained and equipped force, coupled with the current rise of civil unrest in Zimbabwe, justifies the SANDF.

Internally, the SANDF has been an integral weapon against increasing crime. The SANDF worked jointly with the SAPS in all violent trouble spots and high crime areas to re-establish law and order particularly in the Richmond, KwaZulu-Natal area, which had become notorious for its violence. The most common operations were roadblocks, cordon and search operations, and patrols. Most recently the SANDF participated in the state sponsored Operation Good Hope in the Western Cape to eliminate drug trafficking

⁶⁶ For example, MG L.N. Le Roux or the South African DoD, "A Determination of South African Defense Requirements: A Vision for 2015 and Beyond."

⁶⁷ Lekota, 3.

and gang warfare. The SANDF's capabilities regarding domestic issues was evident in the after action reports.

According to the 1998 crime prevention statistics, the SANDF accounted for:

- Confiscation of 3, 161 illegal weapons,
- Recovery of 776 stolen vehicles,
- Recovery of 1,409 head of livestock,
- Apprehension of 35,383 illegal immigrants, and
- Seizure of 60,201 kg of dagga and 17,794 Mandrax tablets⁶⁸

The SANDF has also assumed full responsibility for border control, thus releasing the SAPS members for other duties. Although the DoD and SSD are developing plans to withdraw the SANDF from policing roles, the success of SANDF and SAPS cooperative efforts underscores the value of this relationship as part of the *National Crime Prevention Strategy*. However, such employment requires Presidential authorization, legislative regulation, and is subject to the Bill of Rights and parliamentary approval.⁶⁹ The SANDF has no powers of arrest, detention, or search and seizure, however, so future actions must be limited to threats to constitutional order, such as armed extremist elements, threats from paramilitary forces, large scale political instability, or mass civil disobedience.

⁶⁸ *South Africa Yearbook 1999*, 262.

⁶⁹ *Defence Review*, 27.

E. Structural Concepts

To facilitate a more rapid response, the Department of Defence created a three-tier organization consisting of a Ministry of Defence, an *Intermediate Level*, and a *Unit Level*. The Intermediate structures between the Ministry and the *Unit Level* consist of task forces, type formations, and support formations, which replace existing territorial commands. *Task Forces* are mission driven and their organization lasts for the duration of the assignment. *Type Formations* are the basic building blocks for force projection, and each formation has its own commander. They include, where practical, all units, and support elements related to a specific user type.

Some examples of *Type Formations* by the different arms of service are:

- Army – artillery or armor formations
- Air Force – fighter system group
- Navy – the fleet (only one)
- Military health service – mobile medical formations

In a *Type Formation*, combat and support units are concentrated and supported by a base in a specific geographical location. This organization allows the DoD to tailor force requirements based on the particular mission while improving the cost-effectiveness and core defense capabilities.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ For example, South Africa Yearbook 1999, 258.

Currently, the DoD maintains 26 bases throughout South Africa (Figure 3.4) to support its *Type Formations*. With the dramatic decrease in military spending, base closure or conversion may be an option for future savings.

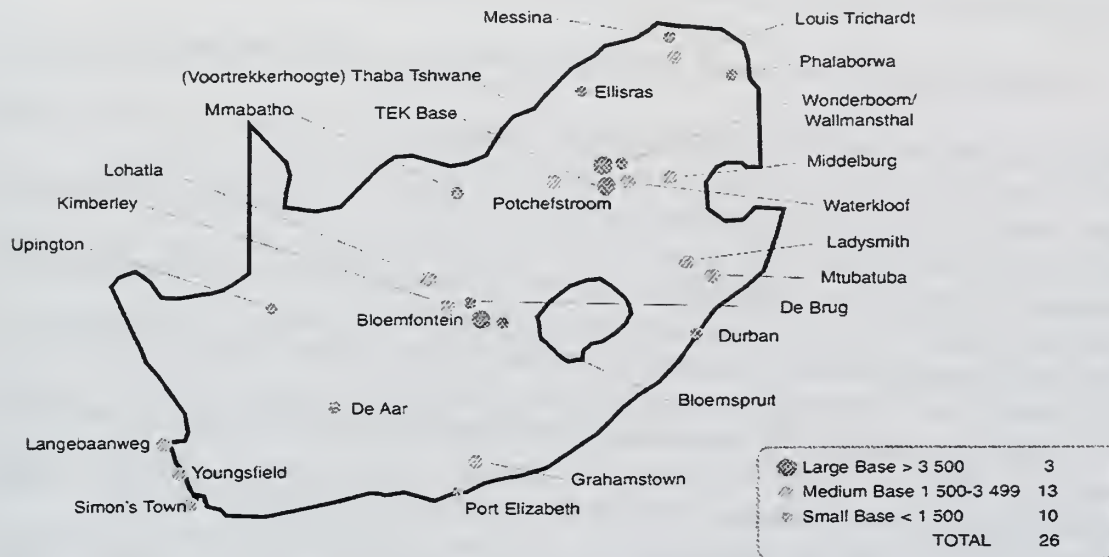


Figure 3.4 Locations of South African Military Bases
Defence Review, 58.

F. Challenges of the Existing Reserve Force

In May of 1999, to become similar to National Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) organizations, the DoD renamed the former Part-time component of the SANDF the Reserve Force (RF) and appointed the Chief of the Part-time Component as *Chief of Defence Reserves*. Other components under his command include the Army Conventional Reserve and the Army Territorial Reserve. The Army Territorial Reserve includes the Commandos, the Air Force Reserve, the Naval Reserve, and the South

African Medical Health Reserve. According to the *Defence Review*, “the core force approach of the DoD relies extensively on the expansion capability inherent in the Part-time Component.” However, this force is dependent on the readiness and resources of the RF and requires societal acceptance impacted by apartheid memories.

Currently, there is no single strategic framework, training doctrine, or resource allocation Model for the RF to plan for future contingencies. Further, the RF’s limited budget, based on pre-1990 compulsory service,⁷¹ and lack of organizational cohesion remains the biggest factors affecting the success of the organization. Approximately 95 percent of RF members serve with the army, so any reform will be in the ground forces.

Since service in the RF is voluntary, the Defence Review addressed issues of pay and compensation recommending that pay be on par with members of SANDF. These recommendations included creating a pension or provident fund for volunteers and a bonus system “sufficient to allow the acquisition of a major appliance...or contribute significantly towards annual holiday...and for tax-free or a marginal rate for Reserve pay.” However, the DoD does not have the resources needed to implement these proposals.⁷² Volunteers currently undergo twelve months of basic military training, followed by eight obligatory annual commitments of thirty days each in the Reserve conventional forces. For new recruits, the report recommends revised basic training at the unit level, non-continuous training on weeknights and weekends, and a maximum of fourteen days continuous training, preferably in the member’s local area. Currently no

⁷¹ *Defence Review*, 101.

⁷² *Ibid*, 101-3.

legislation protects the volunteer's employment rights, which has led to employer resistance to the RF and in extreme cases, restrictive company personnel policies against voluntary service.

G. ARGUMENTS

The RF represents a significant opportunity for the overall defense of South Africa, but using the force will require funding, legislation, social change and popular acceptance of it. Further, for the MoD to effectively employ the RF it must continue to streamline the Territorial and Regular Reserves into a unified RF. The Reserve Force Council (RFC) is key to this success. Created in 1992, the RFC consists of representatives of all RF bodies, former non-statutory members, and a SANDF member, to advise and consult with the DoD on all matters affecting the RF and address RF utilization.⁷³

⁷³ "The South African Reserve Force and Employer Support," MoD Bulletin 45/2000, 19 May 00.

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IV. RESERVE FORCE OPTIONS AND RATIONALIZATION

Given the economic and social factors within South Africa, the benefit of having a trained and integrated Reserve Force (RF) as part of a total force package is both cost effective and appropriate. This chapter examines requirements for force structure of the RF and implementation in terms of potential benefits in South Africa. There are eight dimensions associated with RF utilization. They are:

- Economics,
- Role and mission,
- Force integration,
- Legitimacy,
- Command and control,
- Training,
- Employer Support, and
- Recruiting and retention.

A. Economics of Force Restructure

South Africa's limited and dwindling defense budget justifies RF involvement, and accordingly, the cost effectiveness of RF integration is a paramount concern. Nevertheless, based on the *Core Force* concept, there are limitations to what the RF can do. The success of the RF is dependent on its ability to integrate into the Active Component (AC). Thus, it is unrealistic to assume that even the most highly trained RF replace the AC, or operate outside of AC policies and guidelines. The RF must be part of the total defense budget.

Constrained resources are common in most militaries, including the US. There are certain aspects of US force planning that illustrate the value of RF utilization. The Army Guard's budget for Fiscal Year 1999 is \$6.4 Billion dollars, which equates to approximately 10 percent of the Army's budget and less than 2.5 percent of the Department of Defense Budget. The Army National Guard (ARNG), however, maintains more than half of the Army's total combat power and approximately one-third of its Combat Support and Combat Service support.⁷⁴ South Africa's overall military budget is considerably less than that of the United States, but the apportionment of Guard to Regular forces accords well.

The RF is more affordable because citizen-soldiers require payment only when mobilized for training or mission support. They do not require permanent housing, medical care, or family support centers. Facilities or training areas require a skeleton workforce to perform general maintenance and upkeep, drastically reducing the draw on limited budgets. Presently, there is no budgetary oversight for RF expenditure.

B. Role and Mission

In the United States, the National Guard has a unique dual-mission that consists of both Federal and State roles. Although the force's primary mission is to serve as a Federal Reserve force, the Guard has an equally important role in support of states and local communities. The state executive (generally the Governor) commands Guard units except

⁷⁴ *Army Guard Information Page*, <http://www.arng.ngb.army.mil/home/guardinfo/guardinfo.htm> (Accessed 25 November 2000).

when they support a federal mission, which requires Congressional approval. In this capacity, they complete required training, generally one-weekend a month for refresher training and two weeks out of the year for comprehensive training, and are the first military to respond in states during emergencies. This system is effective because the Guard provides quick response during domestic crisis including natural disaster relief, fire fighting, crowd control, and civil disobedience, and is available to augment AC missions.

In South Africa, the RF responded to various domestic crises including support to the SAPS, boarder security missions, and response to a new outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease that threatened the country's meat export industry. However, the RF lacks a clearly defined mission and role. According to the *White Paper on Defence*, "For political, strategic and economic reasons, the SANDF will be an all-volunteer force. It will comprise a relatively small Regular Force, including a civilian component, which is *backed up by* a sufficiently large Part-Time Component (PTC)."⁷⁵ Later, the description changed: The PTC will consist of personnel who serve on a part-time basis when required...organized, trained, and equipped in such a way that they are available for deployment *alongside* Regular Force members. The language of *back up* and *alongside* has led to some confusion as to the intended mission of the RF.⁷⁶

From a US perspective, and one that applies to South Africa, the strength of the RF is that units operate in local communities, and community members fill its ranks.

⁷⁵ *White Paper on Defence*, 22.

⁷⁶ For example, "Strategic Framework for the Reserve Force of the SANDF" (C DEF RES/D RES/R/302/2).

These members bring with them various non-military skills that prove useful in times of domestic crisis. For that reason, the primary near-term mission of the RF should focus on the internal domestic issues that plague the society and the secondary roles that the AC cannot complete due to downsizing and regional security issues. These secondary missions include:

- Disaster Relief;
- The provision and maintenance of essential services;
- Search and rescue; and
- Evacuation of South African citizens from high-threat areas.⁷⁷

C. Force Integration Requirements

Integration is the ability of the RF to join with the AC during times of mobilization and encompasses a wide range of issues. They are:

- Legitimacy; not just within the military but acceptance by the civilian population;
- Command and control;
- Training;
- Employer support; and
- Recruiting and retention.

South Africa has determined that a core force is necessary. The success of the Reserve Force requires the existence of a core active military component; the RF cannot totally replace the AC.

⁷⁷ White Paper on Defence, 19.

In the United States, debates about integration continue, but as the last ten years illustrate, with improved training relationships, joint exercises, and concurrent deployments, the AC and RC work as combined defense team. The South African DoD and MoD must place the same importance on seamless integration when it comes to increased RF involvement.

1. Legitimacy

Citizens, the military, and the state must accept the RF if it is to be legitimate.

The *Defence Review* highlights key elements that would legitimize the RF:

- Ensure the [RF] reflects the principles of the Constitution and the policies contained in the *White Paper on Defence*;
- Ensure that the [RF] meets the requirements of the SANDF;
- Ensure that the [RF] reflects the composition and cultural diversity of South Africa;
- That it remains an integral part of the SANDF's force design and structure;
- Capable of fulfilling its functions in an efficient and effective manner; and
- Service conditions of the [RF] are designed to attract and retain sufficient volunteers to meet the SANDF's force level requirements.⁷⁸

The most difficult factor in gaining social support and legitimacy for the RF in communities is changing their apartheid perceptions of RF members, mainly Commandos. Future RF missions must focus on supporting the community to offset any negative memories of apartheid.

⁷⁸ Defence Review, 92-3.

Although the SAPS are the state's primary law-enforcement, the presence of a legitimate RF unit in a high crime area, like Cape Town, where vigilante groups have taken action against criminals and residents are desperate for protection and distrustful of the police, could foster a sense of community support and improve civil-military relationships. The state has already deployed members of the RF in co-operation with the SAPS. "Because of their dual role as citizens and soldiers, [they] have displayed a high level of maturity and have been a stabilizing influence in these operations."⁷⁹ Integrated Commando units have deployed during elections and provided polling station security, have provided support to local authorities in flood and snow relief, and have cooperated with the SAPS to fight crime.

A well organized, equipped, trained, and controlled RF can enhance civil-military relations in a state because the RF has close ties with the community, broadly represents society, and has strong ties to the military ties. (Figure 4.1).

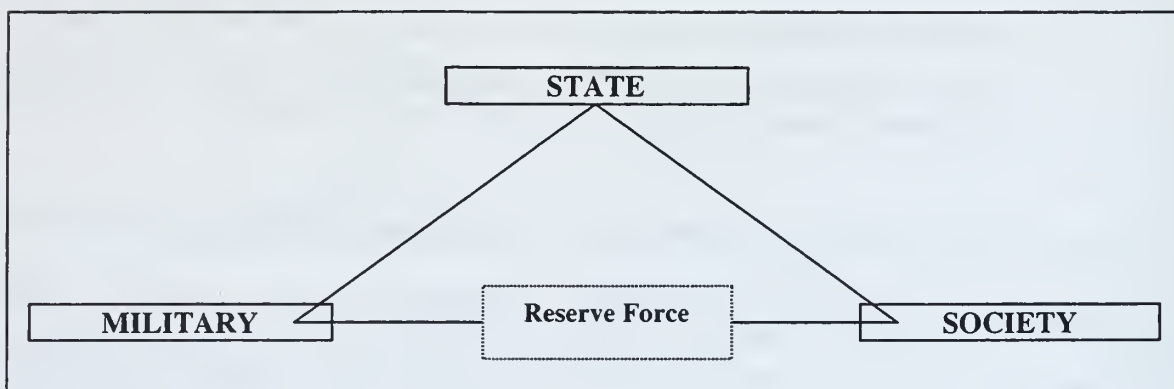


Figure 4.1 – Benefits of a Reserve Force in Civil-Military Relations

⁷⁹ Ibid, 95.

Since the members of a Reserve Force live and serve in the communities, society is more likely to accept them and, in turn, gain a better understanding of military affairs and culture. While in uniform the reservist brings firsthand knowledge of civilian affairs to the military, thus enhancing the overall relationship.

2. Command and Control

Command and control presents a unique set of challenges in South Africa. These include:

- Incorporating various Part-time components and territorial units under the new RF structure;
- Restructuring and disbandment of unnecessary PTC units; and
- Uniform and equipment of the various reserve forces.

The role and success of the RF is dependent on shared command and control/management and the involvement of the RF in decision making at all levels, including Divisional and Corporate HQ level.⁸⁰ As Figure 1.2 showed, the Chief of the Part-time Component (CPTC) reports to the Chief SANDF. The relationship between the CPTC and CSANDF requires attention, but it appears on track. A Part-time Forum meeting in early 1998 captured one of the main challenges in the Command and Control relationship: there is “a gap between policy relating to the PTC and the implementation

⁸⁰ Mission Success Factors as defined in “Strategic Framework for the Reserve Force of South Africa,” par 24, sect. c.

of that policy, particularly with regard to the allocation of resources.”⁸¹ This implies that the RF is at the mercy of the SANDF.

According to the *Defence Review*, the aspects of command and control include the following:

- The [RF] and the [RFC] should be involved in force design and rationalization initiatives affecting the RF;
- Restructuring of the command and control structures of the RF within the SANDF;
- Design of a program for accelerated training and development of RF members; and
- Transformation of the SANDF must foster a common military culture amongst both AC and RF members.

The creation and incorporation of the RFC has provided a major step toward including RF in defense planning. Nevertheless, without a clear mandate about RF funding, the effectiveness of the RF is questionable.

3. Training

Training must adhere to mission requirements, and presently there is no overarching strategy for RF in South Africa. To achieve seamless integration, the MoD must establish unilateral standards for all military personnel, include AC members in the training evaluation process, and provide resources and opportunities for RF training. In the United States, individual training and education requirements of the citizen-soldier mirror that of the active component. For example, all soldiers attend the same initial basic training while officers attend branch qualification and most specialty training

⁸¹ Department of Defence: South Africa, (Bulletin 35/98, 17 June 1998) 1.

courses alongside their active-duty counterparts. Although much of the Guard's training focuses on Platoon level tasks and below (due to limited resources), larger scale training takes place continually, often using the Army's combat training centers. The AC provides training evaluation, incorporated with reserve commander evaluations, ensures the reserve forces adhere to the established standards and assist reserve component training at battalion and brigade levels through regional Training Support Brigades (TSB). Integrated training and AC evaluations of RF training enabled exchanges between AC and RC members and enhanced the overall effectiveness of the total force concept.⁸²

4. Employer Support

As experience in the United States shows, the relationship between citizen soldiers and their employers is paramount to the success of the organization. For that reason, the US has legislation that protects the individual's job and employment when they serve Active Duty. Currently, South Africa has no such legislation.

The South African government has begun to educate employers about the new force structure and voluntary service requirements with the establishment of the National Defence Liaison Council (NLDC). The Primary mission of the voluntary NLDC is to "communicate actively with, and advise and generate support from, employers, organized

⁸² *Army Guard Information Page*

labor and the community for the Reserve Force.”⁸³ Key to gaining employer support is marketing the skills the employee receives while on active duty. These skill include:

- **Leadership and Management Skills.** Reservists are taught, develop and use essential personnel management, instructional and administrative abilities;
- **Work Values.** Reserve training supports the development of important attitudes and values such as personal discipline, loyalty, accountability, and integrity, until they become second nature; and
- **Specific Occupation Training.** Many reservists undergo trades related training that may be directly transferable to the civilian workplace.

As the dependency on the RF grows, it is imperative the SANDF and government recognize the employers for their support and dedication to the service member.

5. Recruiting and Retention

Recruiting and retention depends on a clear and integrated force structure concept. Presently, recruiting practices of the RF, SANDF, and PTC in South Africa appear fragmented. The Minister of Defense mandated recruiting and retention practices in the future of the RF. These include:

- Recruiting must encourage nation-building;
- Ensure a balanced mix of members in terms of race, ethnicity, and gender;
- Encouraging members to stay through attractive, challenging, and rewarding service;
- Each arm of service should determine the number of recruits required for each regiment.⁸⁴

⁸³ “South African Reserve Force and Employer Support,”

⁸⁴ Defence Review, 98.

Under civilian control of the military, it is imperative the state dictate the size and force structure of the armed forces based on budget and mission constraints with input from the defense organizations. The MoD must maintain oversight and quality control over those recruited even when recruiting and retention is decentralized.

Threat and mission determine the RF structure, but with the current high levels of unemployment in South Africa, and the lack of skilled labor, the RF would be an excellent job skills program for citizens. Service in the RF provides opportunities for continued service by members of the SANDF. In the United States, service in the Guard and Reserve enables members access to the G.I. Bill, educational opportunities, skills training in computers, construction, equipment operation that correlate directly to civilian employment. In turn, these skills enhance the overall quality of society.

Financial limitations hamper benefits to RF service, but South Africa is working to enhance RF involvement. Recruiting and retention success depends on South Africa's ability to determine the role and mission of the RF, providing meaning to RF membership, and improving employer support.

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V. CONCLUSIONS

There are no easy solutions for South Africans as their democracy moves into the twenty-first century. The euphoria created by the ending of apartheid has waned while initial changes in force structure have placed the military under heavy stress. Integration of the RF into the South African national defense strategy requires additional commitment by society, government institutions and the military. Apartheid ghosts remain present at every level of society and government and the challenges that lie ahead require careful planning and combined effort. Nevertheless, the government must continue in its process towards consolidation and redistribution of limited resources. The economics and social issues within South Africa will continue to take precedence over potential external factors and forces, but the potential for regional hostility provide rationalization for a continued state military power.

The primary obstacles regarding RF integration into the SANDF are the support and acceptance by the citizens and a need for clear state strategy regarding roles and missions. The RF in itself does not solve the internal issues of South Africa. However, with continued transformation and inclusion in the state security planning process, the RF can

- Reduce defense budget requirements while enhancing the overall combat capabilities of the SANDF through task force assistance;
- Create a larger more representative civilian participation in defense matters through local RF units and improve apartheid perceptions of Commandos and military personnel;
- Provide an opportunity for labor skill education to unskilled citizens, which enhances the economic capabilities of South African citizens;

- Provide assistance to local SAPS; and
- Allow for international peacekeeping exchanges between South Africa and other nations.

It is the state's responsibility to ensure the RF receives the necessary resources and guidance to achieve the desired end state. These responsibilities are as follows:

- Allocate state funds specifically for the RF;
- Ensure soldiers receive pay and benefits equal to the active component;
- Pass legislation protecting citizen-soldier employer rights; and
- Establish and ensure uniform standards for all military personnel.

From an international standpoint, the existing democracies that supported South Africa's transition from apartheid to democracy must be willing to provide support and knowledge as the government seeks solutions to the difficult future defense and social problems. Moreover, if the integration of the RF is successful in South Africa it will lead to opportunities within the global and regional community to include increased recognition by NATO, peacekeeping opportunities with southern Africa, and training exchange with the United States. Further, other African and formerly militaristic states can look to South Africa as an example of how a country can successfully meet the demands of competing interests.

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